

CLAIMS

The invention is claimed as follows:

1. A snowblower for use on a ground surface, said snowblower comprising:
 - a housing including an open front portion defined by spaced apart side walls, and a rear wall connected to said side walls;
 - a discharge chute connected to said housing;
 - a handle connected to the housing; and
- 10 an impeller movably coupled to the housing, said impeller including at least one blade having a body formed from a plurality of plies of flexible material, wherein
 - (i) each of a plurality of said plies include an internal layer of reinforcement material,
 - (ii) one layer of reinforcement material in one ply of flexible material is angled in a first direction,
 - (iii) a second layer of reinforcement material in an adjacent ply of flexible material is angled in a second different direction,
 - (iv) said plies define a working edge adapted to engage the ground surface,
 - (v) said working edge defines a plurality of indentations to reduce the amount of surface area of the working edge of the blade that engages the ground surface, and
 - (vi) wherein said indentations are formed by the engagement between said plies and said reinforcement material.
- 20 2. The snowblower of Claim 1, wherein said impeller includes a plurality of blades that are each adapted to engage the ground surface.
- 30 3. The snowblower of Claim 1, wherein at least one layer of reinforcement material includes a plurality fibers.

4. The snowblower of Claim 3, wherein said fibers are nylon.
5. The snowblower of Claim 3, wherein said fibers are polyester.
6. The snowblower of Claim 1, wherein each layer of reinforcement material includes a plurality fibers.
7. The snowblower of Claim 1, wherein said plies of the body are rubber.
8. The snowblower of Claim 7, wherein said rubber plies are formed from a section of tire rubber.
- 15 9. The snowblower of Claim 1, wherein said blade includes a plurality of apertures for attaching the blade to the impeller.

10. A snowblower for use on a ground surface, said snowblower comprising:

a housing including an open front portion defined by spaced apart side walls, and a rear wall connected to said side walls;

5 a discharge chute connected to said housing;

a handle connected to the housing; and

an impeller movably coupled to the housing, said impeller including at least one blade having a body formed from a plurality of plies of fiber reinforced tire rubber, wherein:

10 (i) each of said plies including an internal layer of reinforcement fibers,

(ii) said layers of reinforcement fiber material extend in different overlapping directions and are not interwoven,

(iii) said plies define a working edge adapted to engage the

15 ground surface,

(iv) said working edge defines a plurality of indentations to reduce the amount of surface area of the working edge of the blade that engages the ground surface, and

(v) wherein said indentations are formed by the engagement

20 between said plies and said fibers.

11. The snowblower of Claim 10, wherein said impeller includes a plurality of blades that are each adapted to engage the ground surface.

25 12. The snowblower of Claim 10, wherein said fibers are nylon.

13. The snowblower of Claim 10, wherein said fibers are polyester.

14. The snowblower of Claim 10, wherein said blade includes a
30 plurality of apertures for attaching the blade to the impeller.

15. A snowblower impeller blade adapted to be connected to a snowblower, said blade comprising:

a body formed from a plurality of plies of flexible material, wherein:

- 5 (i) each of a plurality of said plies includes an internal layer of reinforcement material,
- (ii) one layer of reinforcement material in one ply of flexible material is angled in a first direction,
- (iii) a second layer of reinforcement material in an adjacent ply of flexible material is angled in a second different direction,
- 10 (iv) said plies define a working edge adapted to engage a ground surface when the blade is attached to a snowblower,
- (v) said working edge defines a plurality of indentations to reduce the amount of surface area of the working edge of the blade that engages the ground surface, and
- 15 (vi) wherein said indentations are formed by the engagement between said flexible material and said reinforcement material.

16. The snowblower impeller blade of Claim 15, wherein each layer 20 of reinforcement material includes a plurality of plies of reinforcement material angled in a plurality of different directions.

17. The snowblower impeller blade of Claim 15, wherein said reinforcing material is nylon.

25 18. The snowblower impeller blade of Claim 15, wherein said reinforcing material is polyester.

19. The snowblower impeller blade of Claim 15, wherein said flexible 30 material is rubber.

20. The snowblower impeller blade of Claim 15, wherein said body is formed from a section of tire rubber.

21. The snowblower impeller blade of Claim 15, wherein said body 5 includes a plurality of apertures for attaching the blade to said snowblower.

22. A snowblower impeller blade adapted to be connected to a snowblower, said blade comprising:

a body formed from a plurality of plies of fiber reinforced rubber 10 tire, wherein:

(i) each of said plies includes an internal layer of reinforcement fibers,

(ii) said layers of reinforcing fiber extend in different overlapping directions and are not interwoven,

15 (iii) said plies define a working edge adapted to engage a ground surface when the blade is attached to a snowblower,

(iv) said working edge defines a plurality of indentations to reduce the amount of surface area of the working edge of the blade that engages the ground surface, and

20 (v) wherein said indentations are formed by the engagement between said plies and said fibers.

23. The snowblower impeller blade of Claim 22, wherein said fibers are nylon.

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24. The snowblower impeller blade of Claim 22, wherein said fibers are polyester.

25. The snowblower impeller blade of Claim 22, wherein said blade 30 includes a plurality of apertures for attaching the blade to the impeller.

26. A method of making a snowblower impeller blade adapted to be connected to a snowblower, said method comprising:

- (a) compressing a section of fiber reinforced tire rubber, wherein said fibers are not interwoven and wherein said section includes a plurality of plies of tire rubber, each ply having a layer of reinforcement fibers, wherein said compression causes the rubber to expand and said expanded rubber causes said reinforcement fibers to stretch;
- (b) cutting said compressed section of flexible material with a cutting member; and
- 10 (c) allowing said compressed section to decompress after said cutting, wherein said decompression causes said internal layer of reinforcement fibers to retract a greater length than said tire rubber to form a plurality of indentions at a working edge of the blade.

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